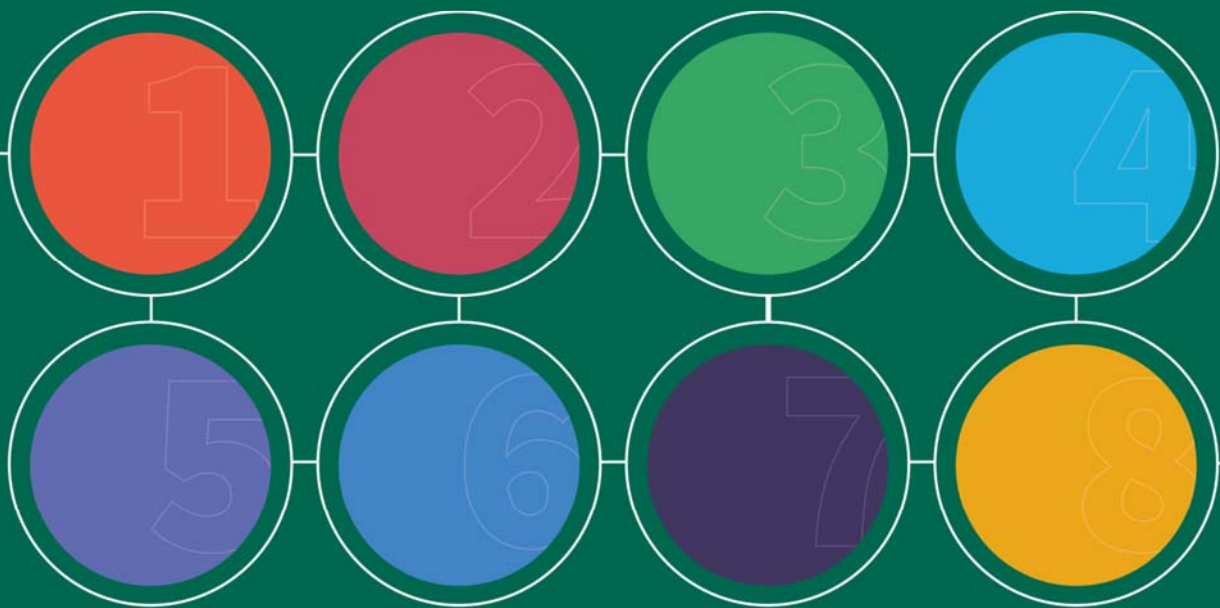


Finance and Property Services Management Plan 2021/22



An introduction to the Management Plan from the Head of Finance and Property Services

The Management Plan is a key planning document that explains how the service will support the delivery of the council's eight priorities in 2021/22

West Lothian Council is one of the top performing local authorities in Scotland, with a strong track record of delivering better outcomes for local people. The council aims to continue to support growth in the thriving local community and, with financial and demographic challenges ahead, will require an effective Finance and Property Services team to support transformation.

In Finance and Property Services we provide a wide range of services to customers and to all areas of the council. Each is designed to efficiently contribute to positive outcomes in the eight corporate priorities (see below) through effective models of support, planning, policy and advice in relation to: Anti-Poverty Service, Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud, Financial Management, Property Services, and Revenues.

Corporate Priorities 2018/23 | The council re-committed to eight ambitious priorities following a large public consultation in 2017/18. We believe these priorities will continue to support improvement in the quality of life for everyone living, working and learning in West Lothian and will be the focus for council services, resources and staff in the next two years.



In support of the Corporate Plan 2018/23 and the eight priorities we will continue to strive to improve the quality and value of council services.

As well as assuring effective governance and compliance, Finance and Property Services will maintain a clear focus on delivering Best Value, whilst empowering residents and stakeholders to have their say on how council services develop and transform.

This management plan fulfils a number of planning and improvement requirements and importantly, it sets out how the service will use its resources to

deliver positive outcomes for West Lothian. It is the result of a detailed process to make sure that council services are well planned and managed.

I hope that it will help our customers, employees and partners to understand how we will transform our services and continue to deliver for West Lothian.



Donald Forrest
Head of Finance and Property Services

Our services

The services that we will deliver through collaboration with our partners in 2021/22

Finance and Property Services provides positive leadership so that the council, along with our Community Planning Partners, continues to modernise and provide high quality services, fulfil the needs of communities, and secure targeted outcomes. In the next two years the service will continue to deliver value adding activities and will assist in the implementation of the council's transformation programme through:

- ◆ Advice and support on financial management processes
- ◆ Advice, assistance and support to empower communities
- ◆ Effective management of council properties whilst increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy
- ◆ Redesign of business processes to support more efficient service delivery and an integrated approach
- ◆ Providing professional support to services in the implementation of strategies, plans, programmes and projects
- ◆ The modernisation of property assets
- ◆ Delivery of revenue and capital strategies
- ◆ Effective treasury management

The key activities of the service are identified in the Management Plan with the following unit service teams:

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Supporting the delivery of Council priorities

The service will support the delivery of the Council’s Corporate Plan priorities and strategies

The service will make a meaningful and measurable contribution to the delivery of the Council’s Corporate Plan 2018/23. As well as continuing to play a core role in the Revenue Budget, Capital Budget, Asset Management, Anti-Poverty and Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud strategies, the service’s key processes are aligned to the Corporate Plan priorities/enablers and deliverables in the following table.

Alignment with Corporate Priorities / Enablers					
Council priority / enabler	Deliverable	Finance and Property Services key activity / process	Indicator(s)	2020/21 Performance	2021/22 Target
3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	(P3.1) Agreeing a comprehensive Anti-Poverty Strategy for 2018 to 2023 and annual action plans, along with Community Planning Partners that will maximise the impact that can be achieved locally in positively addressing the causes of poverty and in mitigating the impact of poverty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Create an anti-poverty task force which will include local councillors who will provide a strategic overview. ◆ Create an anti-poverty practitioners network to support the delivery of the annual action plan. ◆ Develop and publish a Local Child Poverty Action Plan annually in partnership with NHS Lothian. ◆ Develop and integrate food poverty activity into annual action plan. 	<p>Anti-Poverty Task Force is convened and meets four times per year</p> <p>Network meeting bi-monthly.</p> <p>Publish plan annually.</p>	<p>Task Force meeting regularly and reporting to CPP Board</p> <p>Integrating new reporting requirements into remit</p>	<p>Virtual meetings to continue quarterly to develop and deliver Covid-recovery action plan</p>

Alignment with Corporate Priorities / Enablers					
Council priority / enabler	Deliverable	Finance and Property Services key activity / process	Indicator(s)	2020/21 Performance	2021/22 Target
3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	(P3.2) Engaging on an ongoing basis with people experiencing poverty in West Lothian and using the council's platform to raise these experiences with the Scottish and UK governments and other stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Create an Experts Through Experience panel consisting of a cross-section of West Lothian residents who have recent, lived experience of being poor. ◆ Work with the Panel on a regular basis to seek their views on activity and proposed projects to alleviate poverty. ◆ Through the proposed Anti-Poverty Practitioners network, canvas and seek information and evidence. 	<p>Number of Experts Through Experience recruited, trained and utilised.</p> <p>Bi-monthly meetings with practitioners network delivered.</p>	<p>Panel members meeting on a bi-monthly basis – change to virtual and emails due to Covid restrictions</p>	<p>Develop a virtual focus group to gain a wider range of views</p>
3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	(P3.3) Process claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction promptly for those on benefits and/or low incomes, mitigating the impact of the introduction of Universal Credit Full Service as much as possible through effective planning and review of processes. Ensure funds available for the Scottish Welfare Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments are utilised in full to support our most vulnerable citizens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Administration of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction, including appeals and interventions. Administration of Scottish Welfare Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments. 	<p>APS078_ Number of days to process new Housing Benefit claims</p> <p>APS068_ Number of days to process new Council Tax reduction claims</p> <p>APS072_ Scottish Welfare Fund spend against budget</p> <p>APS054_ Discretionary Housing Payment spend against budget</p> <p>APS076_ Percentage of eligible tenants receiving a Discretionary Housing Payment to mitigate the impact of the "bedroom tax"</p>	<p>15 days</p> <p>15 days</p> <p>100%</p> <p>100%</p> <p>100%</p>	<p>15 days</p> <p>15 days</p> <p>100%</p> <p>100%</p> <p>100%</p>

Alignment with Corporate Priorities / Enablers					
Council priority / enabler	Deliverable	Finance and Property Services key activity / process	Indicator(s)	2020/21 Performance	2021/22 Target
Financial planning	(E1.1) Delivery of the two year revenue plan for 2021/22 to 2022/23 that will enable the council to deliver the Corporate Plan.	◆ Preparing two year revenue budget for 2021/22 to 2022/23.	FM003_Two Year Revenue Budget Approval Within Set Deadlines	100%	100%
		◆ Joint working approach with Transformation Team to review and monitor delivery of 2021/22 savings and overall two year plan.	FM091_Budget Strategy and Planning Compliance with Timescales for Reporting	100%	100%
Financial planning	(E1.2) Monitoring progress towards delivery of the 2021/22 budget and the overall two year revenue budget for the period 2021/22 to 2022/23, taking account of the financial implications of Covid-19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Regular financial monitoring of the delivery of the 2021/22 revenue budget and approved savings. ◆ Regular monitoring of 2021/22 budget risk areas and action being taken to manage pressures. ◆ Co-ordinating the financial monitoring of progress towards delivery of budget savings for 2021/22 and 2022/23. ◆ Close working in partnership with Heads of Service, Corporate Transformation Team and HR. 	FM014_Budget Monitoring – Compliance with Timescales for Formal Reporting	100%	100%
Financial planning	(E1.3) Monitoring delivery of 2021/22 capital budget and the overall long-term capital plan to 2027/28 within available resources and taking account of any financial implications arising from Covid-19.	◆ Co-ordinating the financial monitoring of the 2021/22 capital budget and overall programme within available resources.	FM002_Annual General Services Capital Programme Budget approved within set timescales	100%	100%
		◆ Ongoing development of the capital plan assumptions over the period to 2027/28 taking account of funding and expenditure updates.	FM014 Budget monitoring – Compliance with Timescales for Formal Reporting	100%	100%

Alignment with Corporate Priorities / Enablers					
Council priority / enabler	Deliverable	Finance and Property Services key activity / process	Indicator(s)	2020/21 Performance	2021/22 Target
Financial planning	(E1.4) Developing a corporate asset management strategy that supports effective management of assets.	◆ Delivery of asset management strategy through capital programme delivery.	FM091_Budget Strategy and Planning – Compliance within Timescales for Formal Reporting	100%	100%
		◆ Property Services act as lead for the Council's Corporate Asset Management Strategy (CAMS) that encompasses Property, Roads, Open Space, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), Fleet and Housing.	Corporate Asset Management Strategy (CAMS) agreed by Council with actions defined by officers. CAMS establishes corporate priorities for all asset categories, these are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Compliance ◆ Condition ◆ Suitability ◆ Sufficiency ◆ Accessibility ◆ Sustainability 	100%	100%
Corporate Governance and Risk	(E2.4) Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk.	◆ To enable the council to effectively manage risk, reducing its cost and impact, and ensure the delivery of essential services.	P:IA021_Percentage of risks subject to annual documented risk assessment in Pentana	100%	100%

Finance and Property Services Management Plan 2021/22

Transforming Your Council

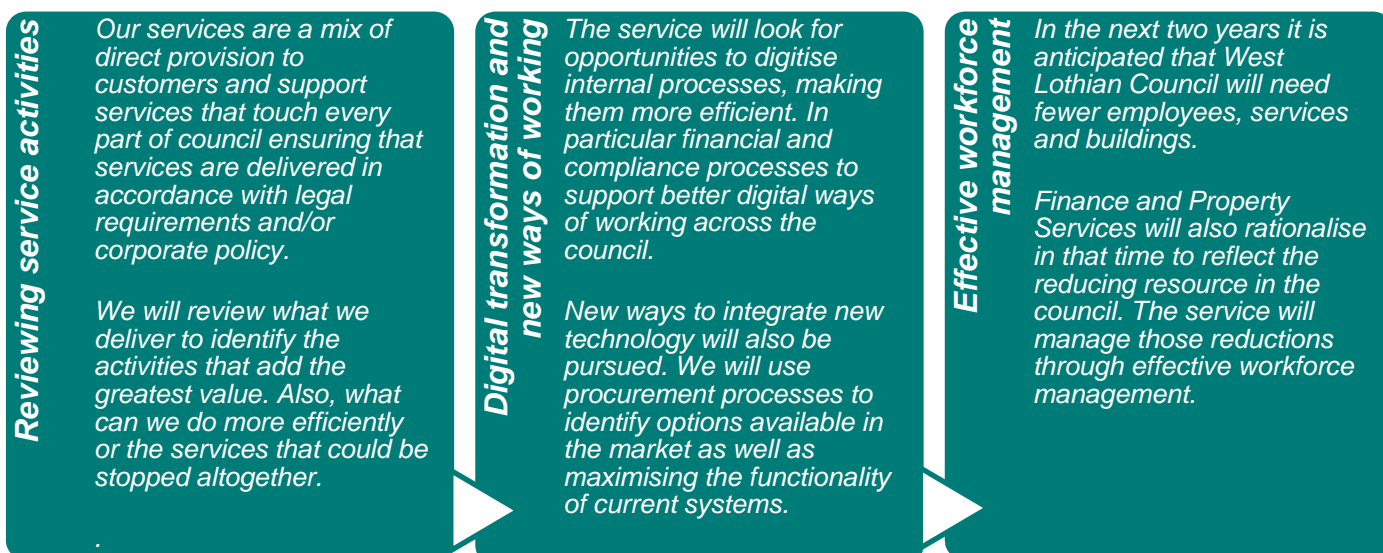
How Finance and Property Services will continue to transform over the period 2018/19 to 2022/23



The council is progressing an ambitious programme of transformation in order to support the delivery of services that are accessible, digital and efficient. The Transforming Your Council programme is intended to deliver over £31 million in savings over the period 2021/22 to 2022/23 and will fundamentally change the way that council services are delivered.

As a service that supports every part of the organisation and some of our key partners, it is critical that Finance and Property Services is at the forefront of change in the council. We must ensure that, as well as supporting services to transform, that we identify more efficient models of support. Projects designed to deliver budget savings of £1.589 million have been approved to transform the way that we work in Finance and Property Services.

Transformation in the service will be grouped around three key themes.



Engagement methods

Throughout the period of this plan, Finance and Property Services will continue to engage and consult with customers, employees, trade unions, partners and stakeholders on the effectiveness of the services that we provide and also about any changes that are proposed to the offering. Details of planned engagement and consultation methods will be provided in the Finance and Property Services annual update to the Management Plan.

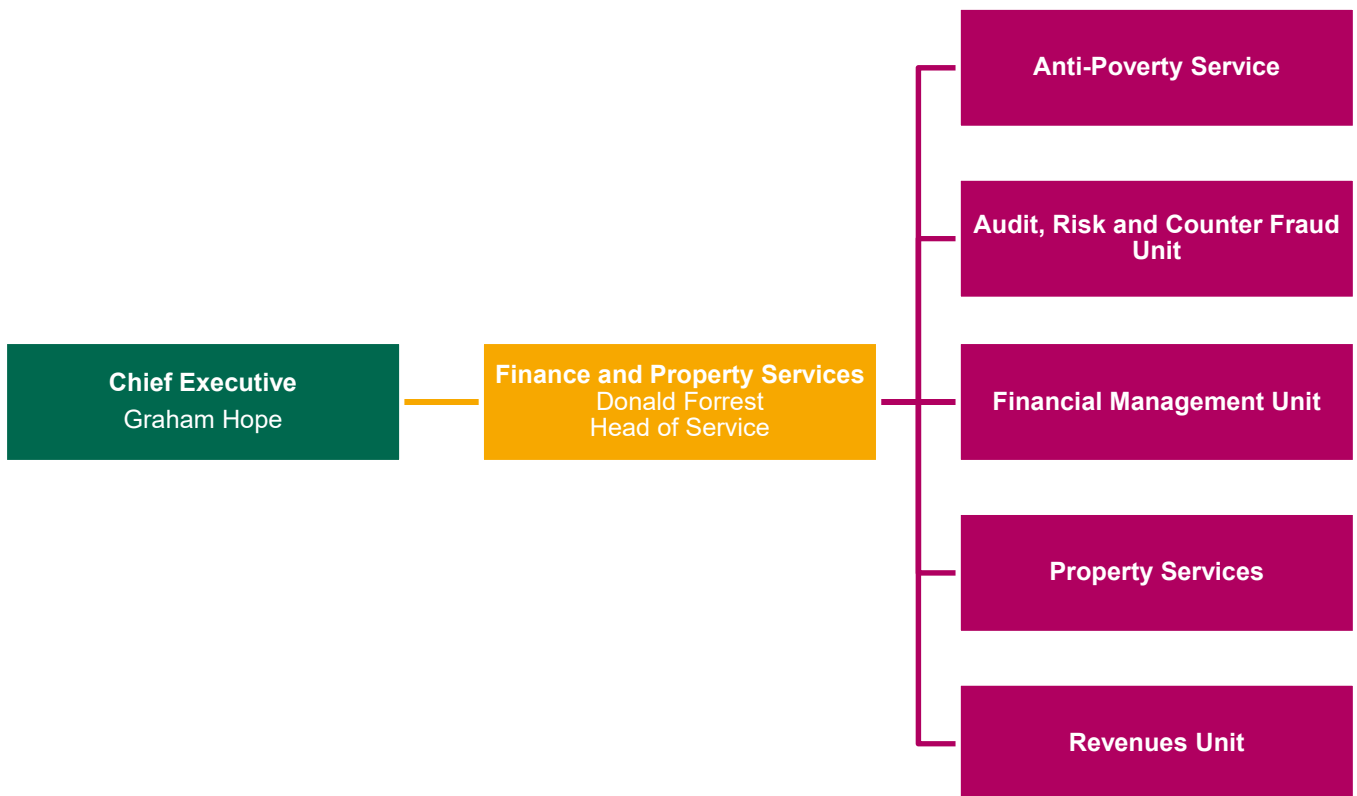
Finance and Property Services make the following commitments to customers, employees and partners:

- ◆ We will involve and engage employees, customers and partners in service improvement and transformation activity through a range of appropriate methods.
- ◆ We will ask customers about the quality and effectiveness of the services that we provide through regular consultation and surveys using their views to inform decision making in the service.

Service Activity

Finance and Property Services is focused on the delivery of key services that support effective governance, financial planning and asset management in the council.

Finance and Property Services is responsible for effective planning and management of financial resources in the council, income collection and the management and disposal of council assets. This includes two large frontline customer services that support collection of income for the council and provide anti-poverty and welfare advice services.



Finance and Property Services comprises of five service areas – known as West Lothian Assessment Model (WLAM) units, under the direction of the Head of Finance and Property Services.

The following section provides more information on the activities and resources of each WLAM unit.

Employee Engagement

Finance and Property Services has a total of 229.2 FTE (full time equivalent) employees delivering our services.

Motivation and commitment are key drivers of employee performance and the service aims to effectively engage and develop employees through improved communication and increased participation. The service uses the council's employee engagement framework, to ensure that employees have access to the information and support they need to succeed, and that there is constructive, regular two-way communication throughout the service.

The schedule of engagement that will take place in each of our WLAM units is outlined in the table below.

Employee Engagement Schedule			
Employee Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer
All employees	Email	Monthly	Service Manager
All employees	One-to-ones	Fortnightly / monthly/quarterly	Service Manager and Service Management Team
All employees	Team meetings	Monthly	Service Manager and Service Management Team
All employees	Team briefings	Quarterly	Service Manager and Service Management Team
All employees	Employee survey	Every two years	Service Manager
All employees	Appraisal and Development Review (ADR)	Annually	Service Manager and Service Management Team
Employee sample	Employee focus group	Annually	Service Manager
All employees	Management Plan Launch	Annually	Head of Service / Service Managers
All employees	Circulation of the Finance and Property CMT update report	Monthly	Service Manager
Service Management Team	Extended Management Team	Six monthly	Head of Service
Service Managers	Service Management Team	Fortnightly	Head of Service
All volunteers	Survey/focus groups	Annually/six monthly	Service Manager

During the pandemic there have been informal meetings in various formats with staff to ensure inclusion and also to promote and support the Employee Health & Wellbeing framework





Risk Management

Risk can be defined as the effect of uncertainty on an organisation's objectives.

The council aims to mitigate risks to its objectives by implementing robust risk management procedures which enable managers to effectively manage their risks.

Significant risks to Finance and Property Services' objectives are set out in the council's corporate risk register. These risks are regularly monitored by managers and are reviewed on a monthly basis by the service management team to ensure that appropriate and effective control measures are in place.

Finance and Property Services' four highest risks are as follows:

Service Risks 2021/22			
Risk Title	Risk Description	Current Risk Score	Traffic Light Icon
REV001 Council Tax - failure to achieve budgeted income	Adverse external factors linked to the COVID-19 outbreak, affecting recovery processes and income collection and impacting on the councils ability to deliver the financial plan for 2020/21 to 2022/23	20	
APS006 Failure to achieve the outcomes of the Anti-Poverty Strategy	Failure to effectively co-ordinate activities with national government or community planning partners may lead to failure to deliver the strategy and achieve the agreed outcomes. 2020-21 Annual Action Plan has been re-aligned to focus on the impact of COVID-19 with specific actions to mitigate the effect on low income households.	12	
WLC031 West Lothian Leisure - failure to deliver financial plan 2020/21 to 2022/23 with a resultant financial impact on the council and / or changes to the scope of services delivered by WLL	Financial implications of COVID-19 are not met by additional funding provided by the Scottish Government. Adverse future financial settlements resulting in changes to funding or unanticipated cost pressures, linked to COVID-19 or other factors could lead to failure to deliver the agreed West Lothian Leisure medium term financial plan, resulting in unplanned service reductions, a failure to deliver key services, reputational damage, and industrial action.	9	
WLC023 Failure to deliver financial plan 2020/21 to 2022/23	Financial implications of COVID-19 are not met by additional funding provided by the Scottish Government. Adverse future financial settlements resulting in changes to funding or unanticipated cost pressures, linked to COVID-19 or other factors could lead to failure to deliver the agreed West Lothian Council medium term financial plan, resulting in unplanned service reductions, a failure to deliver key services, reputational damage, and industrial action.	8	

Anti-Poverty Service

Service manager: Elaine Nisbet

Number of staff: 59.3 (full time equivalents)

Locations: Bathgate Partnership Centre, St David's House and various locations throughout West Lothian

Purpose

The Anti-Poverty Service provides a range of services, many of which support the most vulnerable households in West Lothian. The service contributes to the Council's Corporate Plan priority "Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality" by providing comprehensive advice, support and assistance to people in West Lothian who:

- ◆ Are without work or in low paid work
- ◆ Are poor and / or fuel poor
- ◆ Have money / debt issues
- ◆ Have been affected by cancer or other long term conditions
- ◆ Are in crisis
- ◆ Are in receipt of benefits and /or have an entitlement to payments managed by the service
- ◆ Are being assessed for social care services

The service aims to help these groups increase their disposable income, manage their debt, improve their budgeting skills, remain in their home, and, where appropriate, appeal decisions made by the Department of Work and Pensions. The service also utilises the skills and knowledge of volunteers who play a valuable role in supporting customers to access services and provide a listening ear which can offer a network of support and information.

The service is responsible for the administration of Housing Benefit, the Council Tax reduction scheme and the Scottish Welfare Fund. It also has the responsibility of administering and improving the uptake of free school meals, school clothing grant, education maintenance allowance and blue badges. It provides a front line service to recipients of benefits, which includes processing claims, assessing benefits, processing discretionary housing payments as well as other payments to claimants. The service is responsible for undertaking financial assessments as part of the non-residential contributions policy.

All activity across the service is informed and prioritised by the Community Planning Partnership Anti-Poverty Strategy 2018/23. The overall purpose of this strategy is to reduce inequalities, tackle the causes of inequality to ensure that people are not financially excluded, and to minimise the impact of poverty on the people of West Lothian.

Activities

The main activities of the service during the period of the Management Plan are:

- ◆ Delivering an anti-poverty action plan in partnership with the Anti-Poverty Practitioners' Network which focusses on Covid-19 recovery to support low income households impacted by the pandemic, targets early interventions and contributes to the outcomes of the community planning partnership's anti-poverty strategy.
- ◆ Publishing an annual Local Child Poverty Action Plan Report in partnership with NHS Lothian.
- ◆ Working in partnership to introduce the Improving the Cancer Journey project across the Lothians.

- ◆ Working with the community planning partners and the Scottish Government to embed the West Lothian Food Network and food poverty action plan into local support mechanisms.
- ◆ Working with partners to automate School Clothing Grants and providing a customer focused service for parent/pupil benefit applications for free school meals and Education Maintenance Allowance.
- ◆ Embed a new software system to aid the administration of the financial assessment and income health checks for those adults being assessed for social care.
- ◆ Planning for continued welfare reforms and changes including the on-going development of the Scottish Social Security system.
- ◆ Delivering an advice service which provides income maximisation support, money, debt, fuel and housing advice.
- ◆ Delivering Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Scottish Welfare Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments administration.
- ◆ Working with services to offer a range of volunteering opportunities to enhance delivery and better support customers.
- ◆ Working towards the renewal of the Scottish National Information and Advice Provider standard which is administered by the Scottish Legal Aid Board.
- ◆ Extend the use of Hybrid mail solution to all of the Anti-Poverty Service.

Key Partners

The service actively works with our partners to plan, design and deliver improved services for our customers.

Our key partners include; Macmillan Cancer Support as an external funder, Scottish Legal Aid Board as an external funder, European Social Fund projects as a co-provider, West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy Task Force and Practitioners Group, West Lothian Advice Network, West Lothian Food Network, Department for Work and Pensions, Local Credit Unions: Blackburn, Seafield and District Credit Union and West Lothian Credit Union, Conduit Scotland, Voluntary Sector Gateway West Lothian and Citizens Advice Bureau West Lothian, NHS St Johns, NHS Lothian, HMP Addiewell, Carers of West Lothian, Registered Social Landlords (RSL), Scottish Government (Education Maintenance Allowance), Transport Scotland and other council services.

Customer Participation

The service will actively engage customers and potential customers in the delivery and re-design of services to ensure that they are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences.

Customer Consultation Schedule 2021/22

Customer Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
Anti-Poverty Service customers	Satisfaction survey of 30 customers per week	Weekly	Income Maximisation Manager	Performance indicators
Experts Through Experience	Focus groups on key issues related to the Anti-Poverty Strategy	Regularly	Financial Inclusion Manager	Website/task force meetings
Households in receipt of Housing Benefit/Council Tax Reduction	Paper-based and electronic surveys	Regularly	Financial Support Manager	Performance Indicator
Scottish Welfare Fund	Electronic	Regularly	Financial Support Manager	Performance Indicators
Parents in receipt of Education Maintenance Allowance	Survey relating to services provided	Annually	Financial Support Manager	Public performance reporting
Parents in receipt of free school meals	Survey relating to services provided	Annually	Financial Support Manager	Public performance reporting
Blue Badges	Electronic survey	Regularly	Benefit Assessment & Development Manager	Management Team Meetings
Volunteers	Electronic survey/Focus Group	Annually	Financial Inclusion manager	Management Team Meetings

Activity Budget 2021/22

Anti-Poverty Service – Activity Budget 2021/22								
Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2021/22	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2021/22 £	Revenue Income Budget 2021/22 £	Net Revenue Budget 2021/22 £
Income maximisation	Promote social inclusion by maximising income and improving the standard of living of individuals, families and households who are living in poverty.	3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	APS055_Unit cost of Advice Shop customer enquiries Target £32	Public	14.5	1,791,694	(659,050)	1,132,644
			APS060_Total quarterly amount the Anti-Poverty Service has gained for its customers Target £6.75 million per quarter	Public				
Energy advice	Promote social inclusion by reducing fuel poverty.	3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	APS055_Unit cost of Advice Shop customer enquiries Target £32	Public	4.8	575,902	(211,838)	364,064
			APS064_Total value of energy advice savings - Target £400,000 per annum	High Level				

Anti-Poverty Service – Activity Budget 2021/22

Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2021/22	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2021/22 £	Revenue Income Budget 2021/22 £	Net Revenue Budget 2021/22 £
Money and housing advice	Promote social inclusion by maximising income and improving the standard of living of individuals, families and households who are living in poverty, and prevent homelessness in West Lothian.	3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	APS055_Unit cost of Advice Shop customer enquiries - Target £32	Public	7.4	895,847	(329,525)	566,322
			APS061_Anti-Poverty Service Money Advice - Customer debt managed through money advice intervention - Target £1.5 million per quarter	High Level				
			APS063_Housing advice - number of evictions prevented - Target 40 per quarter	High Level				
			APS072_Percentage of spend against available budget - Target 100%.	WLAM				
Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction	Administration of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction including appeals, interventions and administration of Discretionary Housing Payments.	3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	APS052_Gross administration cost per Housing Benefit case - Target £26.00	WLAM	17.0	2,175,628	(800,275)	1,375,353
			APS078 - Average number of days to process new housing benefit claims - Target 15 days.	Public				

Anti-Poverty Service – Activity Budget 2021/22

Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2021/22	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2021/22 £	Revenue Income Budget 2021/22 £	Net Revenue Budget 2021/22 £
Scottish Welfare Fund	Administration of Community Care Grants and Crisis Grants.	3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	APS052 - Cost of Scottish Welfare Fund per application received - Target £26.00	WLAM	6.0	1,421,470	0	1,421,470
			APS072 - Percentage of spend against available budget - Target 100%.	WLAM				
Entitlement - education	Administration of school clothing grants, free school meals and milk and education maintenance allowance.	3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	APS082 Number of applications awarded	WLAM	2.8	2,406,934	(141,225)	2,265,709
Entitlement - Blue Badge/NEC	Entitlement schemes are supported and administered efficiently and effectively.	3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	APS051 Unit cost of processing application - Target - £16	WLAM	1.7	191,968	(70,613)	121,355
			APS019 Percentage of Blue Badge applications processed within seven working days - Target - 90%	Public				
Non-residential Contributions Financial Assessment	Undertake financial assessments to determine contribution towards non-residential care.	3 Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	APS083 Average number of days to process new financial assessments - Target 20 days	WLAM	3.0	383,984	141,225	242,709
			APS084 Average number of days to process change of circumstances - Target 7 days	WLAM				

Anti-Poverty Service – Activity Budget 2021/22

Activity Name and Description	Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2021/22	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2021/22 £	Revenue Income Budget 2021/22 £	Net Revenue Budget 2021/22 £
Service support	Provision of management and administrative support.	Enabler Service - Corporate Governance and Risk	Support activities contribute towards the overall performance of the service. Performance is monitored through the indicators for front line activities	2.0	43,324	0	43,324
Total:				59.3	9,886,751	(2,353,751)	7,532,950

Actions 2021/22

The service will undertake a range of actions to support corporate priorities and objectives, improve services and deliver transformation.

Anti-Poverty Service Actions 2021/22							
Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Refreshed Anti-Poverty Strategy	Implementation and ongoing monitoring and reporting of the CPP strategy reflecting on the consequences of covid pandemic.	An effective strategy that will ensure council and community planning partners work collaboratively to maximise the impact that the council and partners can achieve locally in positively addressing the causes of poverty and in mitigating the impact of poverty reflecting on the consequences of covid pandemic.	Anti-Poverty Manager	April 2021	March 2022	Active	A strategic action plan and scorecard have been agreed and an annual action plan developed to support achievement of outcomes and reflecting upon these as a consequence of the covid pandemic. Local Child Poverty Action Plan agreed December 2020. Local Food Action Plan agreed.
Affordable Credit Project	Implementation and monitoring of the project in partnership with Fife and Falkirk Councils.	Improving access of marginalised groups to obtain credit and embed money advice to increase financial inclusion.	Anti-Poverty Manager	April 2021	March 2022	Active	Lending severely affected by Covid-19. Pan council recovery plan to be developed and agreed.
Non Residential Contributions Policy	Development, implementation and ongoing monitoring of objectives of the policy.	Improving understanding of the policy and ensuring those eligible for care are able to contribute to the cost by providing a means tested financial assessment along with a financial health check to increase uptake of entitlement.	Anti-Poverty Manager	April 2021	March 2022	Active	Work ongoing to develop new software to support financial assessment and recovery of debt.

Anti-Poverty Service Actions 2021/22

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Blue Badges/National Entitlement Card	Improve automation of entitlement schemes to make it easier to apply.	Entitlement schemes are supported and administered efficiently and effectively	Anti-Poverty Manager	April 2021	March 2022	Active	Project underway with Improvement Service to extend digitisation of NEC
Free School Meals/Clothing Grants and Education Maintenance Allowance	Development and implementation of a simplified system for customers applying for benefit.	Increase the uptake of free school meals, clothing grants and educational maintenance allowance.	Anti-Poverty Manager	April 2021	March 2022	Active	Ongoing development to increase uptake and utilise data to support Covid-19 payments.
Volunteering	Development of a West Lothian Council Volunteering Policy and strategy.	Improve the number of people choosing to volunteer with the council and co-ordinate activity across service areas.	Anti-Poverty Manager	April 2021	March 2022	Active	Anti-Poverty Service achieved Investing In Volunteer standard.
Food Insecurity	Embed West Lothian Food Network into support services.	Improve access to fresh, frozen and cooked foods to those experiencing food insecurity and to embed advice and support to alleviate hunger.	Anti-Poverty Manager	April 2021	March 2022	Active	West Lothian Food Network finalists in the Scottish Government Public Service Awards 2020. 34 community food providers responding to needs in local communities.

Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud Unit

Service manager: Kenneth Ribbons, Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud Manager

Number of staff: 7.0 (full time equivalents)

Location: Civic Centre

Purpose

The Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud Unit is responsible for ensuring there is a corporate framework in place which enables the council to effectively manage its risks.

The unit also independently conducts internal audits of key risks and investigates allegations of fraud or irregularity. The Audit Committee approves an annual internal audit plan and counter fraud plan. The Governance and Risk Committee approves an annual risk management plan. Following an internal audit or a counter fraud investigation, action plans are agreed with services to address any identified issues.

Activities

The main activities of the unit during the period of the Management Plan will be to:

- ◆ Review and report on the adequacy of controls in relation to the council's key risks
- ◆ Prevent, detect and investigate fraud committed against the council
- ◆ Enable the council to effectively manage risk, reducing its cost and impact, and ensure the delivery of essential services

Key Partners

The unit actively works with our partners to plan, design and deliver improved services for our customers.

Our key partners include; Police Scotland, NHS Lothian, Falkirk Council Internal Audit Service, the Scottish Local Authorities Chief Internal Auditors' Group (SLACIAG) the Scottish Local Authorities Investigators' Group (SLAIG) and other council services.

Customer Participation

The unit will actively engage with customers and potential customers in the delivery and re-design of services to ensure that they are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences.

Customer Consultation Schedule 2021/22

Customer Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
Audit Committee	Electronic Survey	Annually	Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud Manager	Consultation results reported to the Committee.
Governance and Risk Committee	Electronic Survey	Annually	Governance Manager	Consultation results reported to the Committee.
Audit Committee, Senior Managers	Consultation on annual audit plan	Annually	Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud Manager	Annual audit plan is approved by the Audit Committee. The approved plan is reported to the Governance and Risk Board and placed on the intranet.
Audit point of contact	Electronic survey	On completion of audit	Senior Auditor	Questionnaire results published on intranet.
Investigation point of contact	Electronic survey	Annually	Senior Counter Fraud & Compliance Officer	Questionnaire results published on intranet.
Senior Managers	Electronic survey	Annually	Senior Auditor	Questionnaire results published on intranet.

Activity Budget 2021/22

Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud Unit Activity Budget 2021/22								
Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2021/22	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2021/22 £	Revenue Income Budget 2021/22 £	Net Revenue Budget 2021/22 £
Risk Based Audits	To independently review and report on the adequacy of controls in relation to the council's key risks.	Enabler service – Corporate Governance and Risk	IA012_Cost of internal audit cost per £1 million of West Lothian Council's net expenditure - Target £460	Public	3.0	161,642	(2,058)	159,584
			IA014_Percentage of risk-based audits in the annual audit plan completed for the year - Target 100%	Public				
Corporate Counter Fraud	To prevent, detect and investigate fraud committed against the council.	Enabler service – Corporate Governance and Risk	IA041_Cost of counter fraud cost per £1 million of West Lothian Council's net expenditure - Target £320	High Level	3.0	161,642	(2,058)	159,584
			IA040_Average length of time (in weeks) to issue draft fraud reports - Target 14 weeks	Public				
Risk Advice and Business Continuity Management co-ordination	To enable the council to effectively manage risk, reducing its cost and impact, and ensure the delivery of essential services	Enabler service – Corporate Governance and Risk	IA023_Cost of risk management and business continuity cost per £1 million of West Lothian Council's net expenditure - Target £180	High Level	1.0	52,628	(670)	51,958

Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud Unit Activity Budget 2021/22

Activity Name and Description	Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2021/22	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2021/22 £	Revenue Income Budget 2021/22 £	Net Revenue Budget 2021/22 £	
Service support	Provision of management and administrative Support	Enabler Service - Corporate Governance and Risk	IA021_Percentage of risks subject to annual documented risk assessment in Pentana Target 100%	Public	0.0	2,147	0	2,147
Total:				7.0	378,059	(4,786)	272,373	

Actions 2021/22

The service will undertake a range of actions to support corporate priorities and objectives, improve services and deliver transformation.

Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud Actions 2021/22							
Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS)	External review of internal audit compliance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).	Compliance with PSIAS.	Kenneth Ribbons	April 2021	December 2021	Active	The outcome of the review will be reported to the Audit Committee.
Counter Fraud E-Learning	Roll out of compulsory anti-fraud and corruption e-learning to all staff.	Effective counter fraud arrangements.	Kenneth Ribbons	June 2021	December 2021	Planned	The outcome of the exercise will be reported to the Audit Committee
Business Continuity	Desktop test of business continuity arrangements in relation to Whitehill Service Centre.	Effective business continuity arrangements in relation to Whitehill Service Centre	Kenneth Ribbons	April 2021	September 2021	Active	An action plan of agreed improvement actions will be produced.

Financial Management Unit

Manager: Patrick Welsh, Corporate Finance Manager

Number of Staff: 36.6 (full time equivalents)

Locations: Civic Centre

Purpose

The Financial Management Unit (FMU) provides a wide range of financial services. It is responsible for developing revenue and capital financial strategies and for the annual management of budgets through a risk based approach to budget monitoring. Other core activities support and enable service delivery across the council and include insurance cover and advice, VAT and treasury management, accounts payable and preparation of the statutory statements of account.

In 2021/22 a key aim of FMU is to continue to support and enable council services to deliver the agreed revenue and capital budgets for 2021/22 within approved budgets taking account of ongoing financial implications arising from Covid-19.

In addition, FMU will coordinate the financial delivery of a priority based two year revenue budget plan for 2021/22 to 2022/23, which sets out how the council's Corporate Plan priorities will be delivered against the backdrop of an extremely challenging financial climate, which will generate considerable pressure around balancing budgets within expenditure demands and funding constraints.

Activities

The main activities of the service during the period of the Management Plan will be:

- ◆ Budget Strategy and Planning
- ◆ Annual Budget Management and Monitoring
- ◆ Purchase to Pay
- ◆ Finance Systems Maintenance and Development
- ◆ Treasury, Insurance and VAT Management
- ◆ Final Accounts and statutory returns
- ◆ West Lothian Integration Joint Board financial management support

Key Partners

The service actively works with our partners to plan, design and deliver improved services for our customers.

Our key partners include; Audit Scotland, our external auditors Ernst and Young, West Lothian Integration Joint Board, NHS Lothian, West Lothian Community Planning Partners, HM Revenue and Customs, Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), West Lothian Leisure and Hubco, and other council services.

Customer Participation

The service will actively engage customers and potential customers in the delivery and re-design of services to ensure that they are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences.

Customer Consultation Schedule 2021/22

Customer Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
Head of Service	Engagement meetings	Annually	Corporate Finance Manager	Action Note of meetings
Budget Holders	Budget meetings	Quarterly	Accountant	Action Note of Meetings
All customer groupings (Service Managers/Budget Holders, Partner Organisations, Council Suppliers)	Electronic survey	Annually	Group Accountant	Results posted on Intranet

Activity Budget 2021/22

Financial Management Unit Activity Budget 2021/22								
Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2021/22	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2021/22 £	Revenue Income Budget 2021/22 £	Net Revenue Budget 2021/22 £
Budget Strategy and Planning	Preparation of annual and medium term revenue and capital budgets and strategies.	Enabler service – Financial Planning	FM021_Cost of providing a financial management function per £1 million of council revenue budget - Target £2,500	High Level	6.3	477,227	(76,961)	400,266
			CP:FM003_Annual revenue budget approval within set deadlines - Target 100%	WLAM				
			FINSUS2 Uncommitted General Fund Balance as a percentage of council annual budgeted net revenue – Target 20.6%	WLAM				
			FINSUS3 Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream - General Fund– Target 6.7%	WLAM				
Annual Budget Management and Monitoring	Manage and monitor the annual Capital and Revenue budgets including provision of financial advice, VAT management, Grant Claims and completion of Statistical Returns.	Enabler service – Financial Planning	FM021_Cost of providing a financial management function per £ 1 million of council revenue budget - Target £2,500	High Level	13.9	1,094,816	(176,558)	918,258
			FM014_Budget monitoring - compliance with timescales for formal reporting – Target 100%	WLAM				

Financial Management Unit Activity Budget 2021/22

Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2021/22	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2021/22 £	Revenue Income Budget 2021/22 £	Net Revenue Budget 2021/22 £
Final Accounts	Preparation of Final Accounts with the aim of securing an unqualified audit certificate.	Enabler service – Corporate Governance and Risk	FINSUS5 Actual outturn as a percentage of budgeted expenditure – Target 100%	WLAM				
			FM021_Cost of providing a financial management function per £1 million of council revenue budget - Target £2,500	High Level	3.4	252,650	(40,744)	211,906
Treasury Management	Operate an effective Treasury Management Strategy for Loans and Borrowing and Cash Management function.	Enabler service – Financial Planning	FM006_Final Accounts - unqualified audit certificate and reporting within agreed deadlines - Target 100%	High Level				
			FM097_Average cost of servicing loans fund advances in year, interest & expenses - Target 4.5%	High Level	1.2	84,216	(13,581)	70,635
Systems support and records management	Maintain and manage the Financial Ledger and Financial Records.	Enabler service – Corporate Governance and Risk	FM070_Treasury Management - investment rate of return – Target 0.85%	High Level				
			FM021_Cost of providing a financial management function per £1 million of council revenue budget - Target £2,500	High Level	3.2	252,650	(40,744)	211,906

Financial Management Unit Activity Budget 2021/22

Activity Name and Description	Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2021/22	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2021/22 £	Revenue Income Budget 2021/22 £	Net Revenue Budget 2021/22 £	
		FM096_Financial ledger and records maintained in accordance with agreed policies and procedures - Target 100%	WLAM					
Purchase to Pay	To provide a comprehensive, cost effective accounts payable service.	Enabler service – Financial Planning	CP:FM022_Purchase to pay cost per invoice - Target £0.95	High Level	6.0	477,227	(76,961)	400,266
			SCORP08_Percentage of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days - Target 96%	High Level				
Insurance Fund Management	To manage the cost of insurance risk.	Enabler service – Financial Planning	FM080_Total cost of providing the Council's insurance service per £1 million of council revenue budget - Target £9,000	WLAM	2.2	168,433	(27,163)	141,270
Service support	Provision of management and administrative support.	Enabler service – Corporate Governance and Risk	Support activities contribute towards the overall performance of the service. Performance is monitored through the indicators for front line activities.		0.4	13,617	0	13,617
Total:					36.6	2,820,836	(452,712)	2,368,124

Actions 2021/22

The service will undertake a range of actions to support corporate priorities and objectives, improve services and deliver transformation.

Financial Management Unit Actions 2021/22							
Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Revenue Budget Strategy	Development, implementation and ongoing monitoring and reporting of the council's revenue budget strategy taking account of Covid-19 implications.	An effective strategy and monitoring process that provides assurance through regular and timely reporting on the financial delivery of the council's approved revenue budget plans within available resources.	Head of Service	April 2021	March 2022	Active	Monitoring of delivery arrangements for 2021/22 budget and update on progress towards delivery of savings for 2021/22 to 2022/23.
Capital Budget Strategy	Development, implementation and ongoing monitoring and reporting of the council's capital budget strategy taking account of Covid-19 implications.	An effective strategy and monitoring process to provide assurance through regular and timely reporting on the delivery of the council's approved capital budget plans within available resources.	Head of Service	April 2021	March 2022	Active	Monitoring of delivery of 2021/22 Capital programme.
Health and Social Care Finance	Development of integrated financial management and planning taking account of Audit Scotland and Ministerial Strategic Group recommendations	Effective joint working arrangements in place across council, NHS Lothian and IJB to aid integrated financial planning for Health and Social care services.	Corporate Finance Manager / IJB S95 Officer	April 2021	March 2022	Active	Progress on financial management and planning will be reported as part of updates to relevant Council and IJB meetings.

Property Services

Manager: Property Services Manager

Number of Staff: 73.2 (full time equivalents)

Locations: Civic Centre and various Partnership Centres

Purpose

Property Services is responsible for the management and operational availability of the council's operational, corporate and commercial property assets. It provides services to both internal and external customers which include providing strategic direction on the management of the council's property assets, property compliance, asbestos, legionella and fire safety, property maintenance and planned improvements (including the significant summer programme). The unit is responsible for the prioritising and deploying of substantial capital and revenue resources to sustain and improve the council's property asset performance, and leads on the delivery of property investment programmes, projects and modernisation initiatives. The management of energy and the council's carbon commitment obligation, together with providing the facilities management of the council's corporate administration buildings and partnership centres, are also important elements of the unit workload. The council's commercial property portfolio, development land and joint ventures are also the responsibility of the unit and support the council's economic development objectives. Support services through the provision of professional and technical property services and includes statutory valuations, options appraisals and feasibility studies, acquisitions, disposals, property transaction negotiations, development advice, project feasibility, risk assessments and premises management advice and advocacy, business case development, project management, contract management, commercial property intelligence and advocacy, and managing community asset transfers. The unit is also responsible for the management of the council's Public Private Partnership (PPP) contracts.

Key challenges in 2021/22 include continuing to meet the service delivery during the coronavirus pandemic whilst preserving and enhancing the delivery of the current range and level of services to ensure effective and efficient management of the council's property assets in accordance with the various property asset management strategies, plans, policies, programmes and projects. The integration of Property Management and Development and Construction Services into a single Property Services unit from 1 April 2021, whilst initially presenting additional workload challenges to integrate systems, processes and undertake recruitment is seen as a positive development to provide single centre of excellence for the management of the council's property assets whilst also managing significant service and corporate transformation.

Activities

The main activities of the service during the period of the Management Plan will be:

- ◆ Strategic property asset management including ongoing development and delivery of the Corporate Asset Management Strategy, Property Asset Management Plan, Learning Estate Management Plan and other property-based initiatives, projects and programmes.
- ◆ Management and delivery of the Property Capital Programme, including project delivery by external and internal professional teams for both property and other assets (i.e. housing and open space). This includes planned improvements (i.e. summer schools programme, statutory compliance), developer and core funded projects. Total projects undertaken are projected to have a value of over £39.6m.

- ◆ Ensuring through effective management of statutory compliance, condition and systems that there are safe useable environments in all council premises.
- ◆ Management of significant revenue resources in excess of £23.67m deployed in the management, maintenance and operational availability of all council owned, leased and occupied property (i.e. energy, maintenance, non-domestic rates).
- ◆ Management of the council's tenanted non-residential property portfolio (TNRP).
- ◆ Professional and technical services including disposals, acquisitions, statutory valuations, business case development, property ownership records and property advice.
- ◆ Construction, Design and Development professional and technical support including statutory compliance policy and procedure development and support, options appraisals, feasibility studies, condition surveys and maintenance assessments, responsible persons advocacy and support and design services.
- ◆ Work on various property focused service modernisation, efficiency and effectiveness projects and programmes.

Key Partners

The service actively works with our partners to plan, design and deliver improved services for our internal and external customers. All services within the council are partners through the property accommodation they occupy and use for service delivery. Our key external partners include; NHS Lothian and the West Lothian Integrated Joint Board, Police Scotland, Hub South East, Scottish Court Services, Scottish Procurement Alliance (SPA), Scottish Futures Trust and a wide range of other public, private and third sector organisations.

Customer Participation

The service will actively engage with customers and potential customers in the delivery and re-design of services to ensure that they are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences.

Customer Consultation Schedule 2021/22

Customer Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
Heads of Service & Senior Responsible Officers	Engagement and Board meetings	Monthly	Property Services Manager	Action Note of meetings.
Customers who have requested repairs through the Property Helpdesk	Electronic survey	Monthly	Team Principal	Results are posted on the intranet.
Civic Centre and Partnership Centre's user groups	Meetings	Quarterly	Group Facilities Manager	Minutes of meetings.
Customers and Service leads before and during project development	Key Stage Reports and Project Governance documentation presented at Project Board	In line with Key Stages in Plan of Work	Project Officers	Project Board minutes distributed to all present.
Customers – major projects post occupancy evaluation (POE)	Meeting / structured workshop	One year post completion	Team Leader	Results are sent to customers and specific learning points incorporated into Employers Design Requirements for future projects.
Commercial tenants and occupiers of Corporate buildings	Electronic survey	Biennially	Commercial Property Surveyor	Results posted on the internet and/or posted to respondents.

Activity Budget 2021/22

Property Services Activity Budget 2021/22								
Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2021/22	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2021/22 £	Revenue Income Budget 2021/22 £	Net Revenue Budget 2021/22 £
Strategic Property Asset Management	The efficient and effective management of the council's operational properties.	Enabler Service - Modernisation and Improvement	PMD153_Cost of providing the service (per £1 million). Target £3,000	WLAM	2.5	167,131	0	167,131
			SCORPASSET02_Proportion of Internal Floor Area of Operational Properties in Satisfactory Condition - Target 99.4%	Public				
Maintenance and compliance of the council's operational and non-operational property stock	To manage and coordinate all repairs, cyclical maintenance and property inspections of the council's operational and non-operational properties. To manage and coordinate all tests, inspections, risk assessments and related information required to meet with property and health and safety legislation.	Enabler service – Financial Planning	CSg430_Percentage of Properties with a Fire Safety Risk Assessment (FSRA) updated within the last five years - Target 100%	Public	16.1	865,547	(865,547)	0
			CSg409_Percentage of Operational Properties with an Asbestos Register - Target 100%	WLAM				
			CSg430_Percentage of Properties with a Fire Safety Risk Assessment (FSRA) updated within the last five years - Target 100%	High Level				
Cyclical Maintenance	Management of the council's cyclical property maintenance budgets and providing strategic guidance on prioritisation.	Enabler Service - Financial Planning	SCORPASSET02_Proportion of Internal Floor Area of Operational Buildings in Satisfactory Condition: Target 99.4%	Public	0.1	92,005	(33,226)	58,779

Property Services Activity Budget 2021/22

Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2021/22	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2021/22 £	Revenue Income Budget 2021/22 £	Net Revenue Budget 2021/22 £
Reactive Maintenance	Management of the council's cyclical property maintenance budgets and providing strategic guidance on prioritisation.	Enabler Service - Financial Planning	SCORPASSET02_ Proportion of Internal Floor Area of Operational Buildings in Satisfactory Condition Target 99.4%	Public	0.1	92,005	(33,226)	58,779
Property Capital Investment Programme - Property Capital Projects	To deliver General Services (Property) major construction and Planned Improvement projects using in-house resources and external consultants.	Enabler service – Financial Planning	P:CSg601_Percentage of Total Capital Programme Spend Delivered in Year by Property Services Target 100%	Public	21.6	1,161,655	(1,161,655)	0
			CSg651_Percentage of projects delivered on time (GS property) - Target 100%	WLAM				
Management of the Tenanted Non-Residential Property Portfolio	The efficient and effective management of the council's commercial portfolio to maximise income and to maintain long term performance.	Enabler service – Financial Planning	PMD153_Cost of providing the service (per £1 million) Target £3,000	WLAM	5.0	4,347,272	(1,569,949)	2,777,323
			P:PMD164_Percentage of rent outstanding for Commercial Property, (Current debt) Target 4.58%	Public				
Professional services	Including: Valuation for capital accounting purposes; maintenance of property records; granting property rights; provision of expert advice; development of land and	Enabler service – Financial Planning	P:PMD127_Percentage of customers rating the PMD service as good or excellent Target 95%	Public	5.2	4,531,283	(1,636,401)	2,894,882

Property Services Activity Budget 2021/22

Activity Name and Description	Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2021/22	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2021/22 £	Revenue Income Budget 2021/22 £	Net Revenue Budget 2021/22 £	
		PMD169_Asset valuations input to the Atrium within agreed timescales Target 100%	WLAM					
Open Space Capital Investment Programme - Open Space Capital Projects	To deliver General Services (Open Space) major construction projects using in-house resources and external consultants.	Enabler service – Financial Planning	P:CSg601_Percentage of Total Capital Programme Spend Delivered in Year by Property Services. - Target 100%	Public	0.5	22,778	(22,778)	0
			CSg652_Percentage of projects delivered on time (GS Open Space) - Target 100%	WLAM				
Disposal of surplus land and property	Delivering a programme of property disposals to support the council's capital investment programme.	Enabler service – Financial Planning	PMD153_Cost of providing the service (per £1 million) Target £3,000	WLAM	1.5	1,311,082	(473,477)	837,605
Housing Capital Investment Programme - Housing Capital Projects	To deliver housing funded major construction projects using in-house resources and external consultants.	Enabler service – Financial Planning	P:CSg601_Percentage of Total Capital Programme Spend Delivered in Year by Property Services Target 100%	Public	4.0	227,776	(227,776)	0
			CSg653_Percentage of projects delivered on time (Housing) - Target 100%	WLAM				

Property Services Activity Budget 2021/22

Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2021/22	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2021/22 £	Revenue Income Budget 2021/22 £	Net Revenue Budget 2021/22 £
Energy management and climate change	Ensuring effective energy and water management in corporate non-domestic properties through energy efficiency measures. Developing potential projects, analyse consumption trends and setting targets.	Enabler service – Financial Planning	PMD191_Carbon emissions from energy used in buildings (Annually) Target 24,672 tonnes	WLAM	2.0	111,582	0	111,582
			PMD196_Percentage completion of Energy Performance Certificates in operational buildings where required - Target 99%	WLAM				
The facilities management of the Council's Corporate Partnership Properties	Providing an efficient and effective facilities management function in the council's principal office buildings and Partnership Centres.	Enabler service – Financial Planning	PMD133_Customer Satisfaction - Council Officers - Target 90%	WLAM	12.0	10,442,653	(3,771,199)	6,671,454
			SCORPASSET02 – Proportion of Internal Floor Area of Operational Buildings in Satisfactory Condition. Target 99.4%	Public				
The management of the council's Corporate Properties and PPP	The efficient and effective management of the council's operational properties.	Enabler service – Financial Planning	PMD153_Cost of providing the service (per £1 million) Target £3,000	WLAM	2.5	2,185,137	(789,128)	1,396,009
			SCORPASSET02_ Proportion of Internal Floor Area of Operational Buildings in Satisfactory Condition: Target 99.4%	Public				

Property Services Activity Budget 2021/22

Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2021/22	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2021/22 £	Revenue Income Budget 2021/22 £	Net Revenue Budget 2021/22 £
Service support	Provision of management and administrative support.	Enabler service – Financial Planning	Support activities contribute towards the overall performance of the service. Performance is monitored through the indicators for front line activities		0.1	83,321	0	83,321
Total:					73.2	25,841,228	(10,584,363)	15,256,865

Actions 2021/22

The service will undertake a range of actions to support corporate priorities and objectives, improve services and deliver transformation.

Property Services Actions 2021/22							
Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Corporate Asset Management Strategy	Implementation and ongoing monitoring and reporting of the actions contained in the council's corporate asset management strategy and reflecting on the consequences of covid pandemic.	Effective delivery of the strategy reflecting the consequences of covid pandemic including a framework of performance measures for the management of all council assets.	Strategic Property Asset Manager	April 2021	March 2022	Active	Monitoring of actions and performance indicators in the Corporate Asset Management Strategy and reflecting upon these as a consequence of the covid pandemic.
Property Asset Management Plan	Implementation, management, monitoring and reporting of the council's property asset management plan and its activities and reflecting on the consequences of covid pandemic.	An effective plan that delivers the actions and activities to ensure the effective and efficient management of the council's property assets reflecting the consequences of covid pandemic.	Strategic Property Asset Manager	April 2021	March 2022	Active	Monitoring of actions and performance indicators and reflecting upon these as a consequence of the covid pandemic..
Development, implementation, management and monitoring the programme of statutory compliance across the operational property estate	An effective plan and programme that ensures public, staff and users are able to access and use council facilities safely and in full compliance with property related legislation, including (but not restricted to) management of asbestos, fire safety, gas safety, electrical safety and legionella and reflecting on the consequences of covid pandemic.	Operational properties remain open and safe for use at all times reflecting the consequences of covid pandemic.	Statutory Compliance Team Leader	April 2021	March 2022	Active	Detailed programmes in place and reviews of policies in support of programmes (Asbestos, Fire Safety, Legionella) ongoing and reflecting upon these as a consequence of the covid pandemic..

Property Services Actions 2021/22

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Development, implementation and management of the IT System that manages property assets.	Management, monitoring and further development of Property Asset Management IT software and storage systems. Streamlining for property information storage (i.e. sanserver)	To enable ongoing asset management of non-housing council buildings and streamline maintenance and compliance processes.	Strategic Property Asset Manager	April 2021	March 2022	Active	Repairs helpdesk in place and system implemented for all orders & invoicing. Asbestos module in development for implementation plan in 2021/22.
Learning Estate Management Plan	Development, implementation, management, monitoring and reporting of the council's learning estate management plan and its activities.	An effective plan that establishes the actions and activities to ensure the effective and efficient management of the council's learning estate.	Capital Programme and Projects Principal	April 2021	March 2022	Active	The draft plan will proceed to Education PDSP and then to Education Executive for approval.
Delivery of Capital Programme (Property)	Management of Property Capital Programme	Ongoing management, monitoring and reporting of Property Capital Programme and investments within it.	Capital Programme and Projects Principal	April 2021	March 2022	Active	Detailed management and monitoring arrangements in place.
Learning Estate Investment Projects and Programmes	Management of major learning estate investments including refurbishments and planned improvements	Effective and efficient development, implementation, monitoring and reporting of significant learning estate investment programmes to ensure value for money, delivery timescales and budget parameters are achieved.	Capital Programme and Projects Principal	April 2021	Mar 2022	Active	Investment projects programmes will be reported to the Council Executive and Education Executive as appropriate.
Development, implementation, management, monitoring and delivery of property projects	Management of projects & investment in support of the Property Capital Programme of investment.	Successful delivery of investment programme with improved council assets and accommodation which meets the needs of service users and supports efficiencies in service delivery.	Capital Programme and Projects Principal	April 2021	March 2022	Active	Detailed project briefs established with management and monitoring arrangements in place.

Property Services Actions 2021/22

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
New and Replacement Schools Projects	Lead development of funding business cases, implementation, construction, management and commissioning of learning estate projects part funded through Scottish Government Programme.	Securing of additional investment in Learning Estate from Scottish Government and successful implementation and management of projects.	Capital Programme and Projects Principal	April 2021	March 2022	Active	Initial feasibilities undertaken and business cases developed. Beattie ASN School successful for pilot phase. East Calder agreed for phase 2.
Climate Change Strategy, Energy Management and Carbon Management Plan	Climate Change Strategy and Carbon Management Plan to be renewed and recalibrated.	Review, Amend and Recast Climate Change Strategy and Carbon Management Plan.	Energy & Climate Change Manager	April 2021	March 2022	Planned	Review in light of climate emergency declaration will proceed to Environment PDSP then Council Executive.
Commercial Property Strategy	Implementation and ongoing monitoring and reporting of the actions contained in the council's Commercial Property Strategy.	A comprehensive strategy that delivers the actions and activities to ensure the effective and efficient management of the council's commercial property assets that is demonstrated through performance measures.	Commercial Portfolio Manager	April 2021	March 2022	Active	Review of existing strategy to reflect economic changes and monitoring of actions and performance indicators in the strategy reported annually.

Revenues Unit

Manager: Scott Reid, Revenues Manager

Number of Staff: 53.1 (full time equivalents)

Locations: St David House

Purpose

The Revenues Unit is responsible for council tax and business rates billing, administration and collection, providing a direct front line service to all households and businesses in West Lothian.

The unit is also responsible for the collection of miscellaneous income, collection of housing benefit overpayments and underpinning the council's holistic approach to dealing with customers who have multiple debts due to the council through the work of the corporate debt team. The service manages income received through multiple payment channels in excess of £600 million annually.

During 2021/22 the unit will look to maximise income to the council whilst minimising the costs of collection. The unit will continue to modernise and transform service provision, with customer communication and consultation playing a key part in its modernisation activity. The unit will work across services to develop effective strategies in relation to the corporate debt approach. The unit will work closely with stakeholders and partners to plan and prepare for the ongoing impact of welfare reform.

Activities

The main activities of the service during the period of the Management Plan will be:

- ◆ Council Tax
- ◆ Non-Domestic Rates
- ◆ Service Accounts
- ◆ Corporate Debt
- ◆ Income Management

Key Partners

The service actively works with our partners to plan, design and deliver improved services for our customers.

Our key partners include; Department for Work and Pensions, Scottish Government, Lothian Valuation Joint Board, Business Improvement District Companies and other council services.

Customer Participation

The service will actively engage customers and potential customers in the delivery and re-design of services to ensure that they are accessible and focused on their needs and preferences.

Customer Consultation Schedule 2021/22

Customer Group	Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
Council taxpayers	Paper-based and electronic surveys	Daily	Revenues Manager	Results posted on internet, Council Tax booklet and email
Business ratepayers	Paper-based and electronic survey	Daily	Revenues Manager	Results posted on internet, Business Rates booklet and email
Council services	Electronic survey	Annually	Revenues Manager	Results posted on internet and email
Revenues system users	Electronic survey	Daily	Revenues Manager	Incident Tool – software system issues and email

Activity Budget 2021/22

Revenues Unit Activity Budget 2021/22								
Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2021/22	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2021/22 £	Revenue Income Budget 2021/22 £	Net Revenue Budget 2021/22 £
Council Tax	Billing, collection and administration of Council Tax and Water Service Charges.	Enabler service – Financial Planning	SCorp04 - Cost of collecting Council Tax per dwelling - Target £5.00.	Public	20.0	986,874	(776,191)	210,683
			SCorp07 - percentage of income due from Council Tax for the year that was received by the end of the year - Target 96.5%	Public				
Corporate Debt	Collection of multiple debts due to the council, and Housing Benefit overpayments.	Enabler service – Financial Planning	REV149 – Customer income and/or debt reduction generated per pound of staff costs for Corporate Debt Team activity - Target £10.00	WLAM	9.6	467,467	(367,670)	99,797
			REV009 - Cumulative value of Housing Benefit Overpayment recovered - Target £1 million	WLAM				
Non-Domestic Rates	Billing, collection and administration of Non Domestic Rates.	Enabler service – Financial Planning	REV014 - Business Rates cost per property - Target £1.00	WLAM	2.0	103,881	(81,704)	22,177
			REV002 - Percentage of Business Rates received in the year - Target 97.7%	WLAM				
Service Accounts	Collection of the council's service accounts.	Enabler service –	REV016 - Cost of collection for service accounts - Target £8.00	WLAM	2.0	103,881	(81,704)	22,177

Revenues Unit Activity Budget 2021/22

Activity Name and Description		Link to Corporate Plan	Performance Indicator and Target 2021/22	PI Category	Staff Resources (FTE)	Revenue Expenditure Budget 2021/22 £	Revenue Income Budget 2021/22 £	Net Revenue Budget 2021/22 £
		Financial Planning	REV083 - Outstanding service account debt over 12 months - Target £260,000	WLAM				
Business Systems	Provision of a business systems function, including identification of financial error, compliance checks, process development, income management and administration of rent accounting system	Enabler Service - Financial Planning	REV148 - Cost of Business Systems team per £1 million of payments processed – Target £700.00.	WLAM	13.5	649,259	(510,652)	138,607
			REV068 - Percentage of e-returns processed within 6 days - 99%	WLAM				
Business Support	Provision of a support function for all Unit teams.	Enabler Service - Financial Planning	REV111 - Cost of Business Support per £1 million of payments processed - £80.00.	WLAM	6.0	285,674	(224,687)	60,987
			REV131 - The average number of working days to process Council Tax and Business Rates refunds from the date the credit bill is generated. - Target 6 days.					
Service support	Provision of management and administrative Support.	Enabler service – Corporate Governance and Risk	Support activities contribute towards the overall performance of the service. Performance is monitored through the indicators for front line activities	WLAM	0.0	3,209	0	3,209
Total:					53.1	2,600,245	(2,042,608)	557,637

Actions 2021/22

The service will undertake a range of actions to support corporate priorities and objectives, improve services and deliver transformation.

Revenues Unit Actions 2021/22							
Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status	Update
Service Redesign, Integration & Modernisation projects	Develop integrated customer online forms for Council Tax changes that automatically update the back office system.	Customers are able to update their own Council Tax account details.	Revenues Manager	April 2019	March 2022	Active	The upgrade of our Digital 360 workflow system has now been completed. This now facilitates the development of integrated online forms. The online forms have now been identified for development and this can now be planned and progressed.
Service Redesign, Integration & Modernisation projects	Develop processes linked to the Council Tax online portal that will allow customers to track the progress of their change of circumstance enquiry.	Customers who make a change of circumstance enquiry are able to track progress to completion through the online portal.	Revenues Manager	April 2020	March 2022	Active	There has been a delay due to the need to divert resources to other critical Covid-19 related matters. Initial discussions on customer display has been undertaken.
Service Redesign, Integration & Modernisation projects	Further develop and roll out Training Needs Analysis to front line services dealing with customer Council Tax enquiries.	Front line staff have undertaken the Training Needs Analysis and identified training needs have been delivered facilitating improved customer service.	Revenues Manager	April 2020	March 2022	Active	Development of the basic level Training Needs Analysis has been completed. Roll out has been affected due to the impact of Covid-19 on front line services. Plans are in place to move forward with the roll out to frontline services and develop an intermediate level for Training Needs Analysis.

Developing the Management Plan and reporting progress

The Management Plan was developed to support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and to take account of a range of factors that are likely to impact on the delivery of council services in the next three years.

Context

The next two years will be a period of significant challenge for the council with ongoing spending constraints expected to continue. However, the council has clearly defined long term aims relating to the development of high quality services, designed to meet the needs of its customers. These long term aims are captured in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, the Community Plan and in the council's Corporate Plan and together these strategic plans determine the work of the council's services.

The development of the Corporate Plan 2018/23 has been directly influenced by the views of the people living and working in West Lothian, ensuring that all employees are focused on meeting the needs of a growing and vibrant community. The Corporate Plan sets the strategic priorities for the council up to 2022/23 and this will be the continued focus for all council services during the period.

This will help to ensure that we continue to tackle the most important issues for West Lothian. Also, that we invest in and prioritise the services which make the most significant contribution to the achievement of positive outcomes.

Influences

There will be many internal and external factors which will influence the work of Finance and Property Services. The more prominent include:

- ◆ Ongoing implications operationally and financially of Covid-19
- ◆ The impact of the UK leaving the European Union
- ◆ Level of Scottish Government grant funding
- ◆ Introduction and roll out of the Scottish Social Security System
- ◆ Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017
- ◆ Continued welfare changes
- ◆ The ongoing implementation of Universal Credit Full Service and other changes related to welfare reform
- ◆ Changes to processes as Department for Work and Pensions continue to develop the Universal Credit model as roll out progresses
- ◆ Impact of Universal Credit Full Service on Discretionary Housing Payment and Scottish Welfare Fund budgets
- ◆ Implementation of planned statutory changes to the Business Rates system
- ◆ Increase in customers with multiple debts due to the council as a result of Universal Credit Full Service

- ◆ Management and staff restructures following the approval of the council's three year revenue budget and in particular the establishment of the new Property Services Unit which will see the integration of Property Management and Development and Construction Services into a single team.

Planning Process

The Management Plan was developed by the Finance and Property Services Management team, using a range of information to ensure that services, activities and resources are aligned to:

- ◆ The council's Corporate Plan and the deliverables for which Finance and Property Services will be responsible for achieving or contributing to
- ◆ Support the delivery of the council's transformation programme and Digital Transformation strategy
- ◆ Support the delivery of the corporate strategies, including the four that are the direct responsibility of the service for developing and monitoring implementation in the council; the Corporate Asset Management Strategy, Risk Management Strategy, Audit and Counter Fraud Strategy, and the Anti-Poverty Strategy

The process and timescales for the development and publication of the management plan are set out, including consultation with the appropriate stakeholders.




Corporate Plan	The Corporate Plan is approved by West Lothian Council, setting out the key priorities for all council services for the period 2018/19 to 2022/23.	13 February 2018
Finance and Property Services Planning	The service management team develop the plan taking account of a range of factors, business requirements and customer needs.	February to March 2021
Executive Management Team approval	The council's executive management team (EMT) review all service management plans to ensure they are sufficiently focused on corporate priorities. The EMT will also review the plans annually, scrutinising performance and progress in the stated outcomes and actions.	March 2021
PDSP consultation	The Management Plan is taken to the Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel(s) for consultation, providing Panel members the opportunity to shape planning and resource allocation.	18 June 2021
Management Plan launch	The service cascades the plan to Finance and Property Service employees to ensure that they understand the key priorities and challenges ahead and how they will contribute to successful outcomes.	June 2021
WLC website	The Management Plan is published on the council's website to provide detailed information for the public and external stakeholders on council services, resource allocation and performance.	30 June 2021
Management Plan updates	The Management Plan progress is reviewed by the Partnership and Resources PDSP each year	April to June













Continuous Improvement

Finance and Property Services will continue to play a key role in the development and support of high quality customer services. Finance and Property Services will engage with our customers to modernise structures and processes to ensure that they continue to provide the most efficient and effective model for service delivery, including:

- ◆ Using Staff Improvement Groups to review, streamline and modernise processes and improve customer outcomes
- ◆ Better demonstrating and evidencing the variety of benchmarking activity undertaken
- ◆ Implementing actions arising from the West Lothian Assessment Model (WLAM) process in each unit
- ◆ Monthly review of performance by the Finance and Property Services senior management team and the management teams in each unit
- ◆ Ongoing engagement with staff and customers on potential process and service improvements

Finance and Property Services Scorecard

The service will report on the following key measures of the success throughout the lifetime of our plan (short term trend arrows: 2020/21 performance exceeded the target =  / 2020/21 performance met the target =  / 2020/21 performance was below the target = ):

Indicators					
WLAM unit / service	PI Code and Short Name	2020/21 Performance	2020/21 Target	Performance against Target	2021/22 Target
Anti-Poverty Service	APS007_ Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service as good or excellent	96%	95%		95%
	APS017_ Total number of complaints received by the Anti-Poverty Service	20	20		20
	APS055_ Unit cost of Advice Shop customer enquiries	£31	£32		£32
	APS074_ Total annual amount the Anti-Poverty Service has gained in extra benefits for its customers	£27,500,000	£27,500,000		£27,500,000
Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud Unit	P:IA007_ Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service provided by internal audit as good or excellent	100%	100%		100%
	P:IA066_ Total number of complaints received by Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud	0	0		0
	P:IA012_ Cost of internal audit per £1 million of West Lothian Council's net expenditure	£457.00	£460		£460
	P:IA014_ Percentage of audits in the annual audit plan completed for the year	84%	100%		100%
Financial Management Unit	FM082_ Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service as good or excellent.	94%	95%		95%
	FM037_ Number of complaints received by the Financial Management Unit	1	3		3
	FM021_ Total/unit cost of providing the service per £1 million of council revenue budget	£2,150	£3,000		£2,500
	FM091_ Budget Strategy & Planning – Compliance with Timescales for Reporting	100%	100%		100%

Indicators					
WLAM unit / service	PI Code and Short Name	2020/21 Performance	2020/21 Target	Performance against Target	2021/22 Target
Property Services	P:PMD127_Percentage of Customers rating the service as good or excellent	94.6%	94%	↑	95%
	NEW PI: Total number of complaints received by Property Services (New PI due to the integration of two units)	20	22	↓	24
	PMD153_Total/unit cost of providing service per £1 million of council revenue budget	£33,861	£34,000	↓	£34,250
	P:PMD164_Percentage of rent outstanding for commercial property	3.86%	4%	↑	4%
	CSg100_Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service as good or excellent	89%	92%	↓	92%
	P:CSg803_Maintenance Services cost as a percentage of net Revenue Expenditure (Corporate Property)	9.4%	9.5%	↑	9.4%
	P:CSg601_Percentage of Total Capital Programme Spend Delivered in Year by Property Services	100%	100%	-	100%
Revenues	P:REV042_Percentage of respondents who rated the overall quality of service delivered by the Revenues Unit as good or excellent.	91%	90%	↑	91%
	REV122_Total number of complaints received by Revenues Unit	70	100	↑	100
	SCorp04_Cost of Council Tax collection per dwelling	£5.40	£5.00	↓	£5.00
	SCorp07_Percentage of Income due from Council Tax Received by the End of the Year	96.1%	96.5%	↓	96.5%

This scorecard offers a high level snapshot of the service performance. More information about the performance of Corporate Services can be viewed via the council's website: www.westlothian.gov.uk/performance

Finance and Property Services Management Plan 2021/22

April 2021

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